

ART. IX.—*Note on the Rat that invaded Picton in March, 1884.*

By Professor F. W. HUTTON.

[Read before the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury, 5th May, 1887.]

MR. JAMES RUTLAND has kindly sent me four heads of this rat, and I have extracted the skull from one of them and compared it with one of *Mus maorium* from the sandhills at Shag River. The two agree in all essential points, but in the Picton rat the *foramen magnum* is rounded at the top, and the brain-case is relatively rather larger. Length of skull, 1·35 inch; width at zygomatic arch, 0·6; depth from palate, 0·415. *Foramen magnum*, height 0·17, width 0·22.

Mr. Meeson has given a good description of the rat, and has identified it, correctly I think, with *Mus maorium*.\* The following additional particulars have been furnished me by Mr. Rutland.

The rat appears to have invaded Picton at the end of March, and to have suddenly disappeared by the 20th April. Old Maoris recognised it as the rat they used to eat in former times, and said that swarming on to the low lands periodically was always characteristic of it. Mr. Rutland says that a similar visitation, but on a smaller scale, occurred at Picton in 1878 or 1879.

These rats were often noticed climbing trees. In the Pelorus, where they stopped longer, they built nests, like birds, in trees. One in Mr. Rutland's possession had been constructed in the crown of a tree-fern, from dried leaves and the hairs of the fern-fronds. They fed on green vegetables as well as on berries.

This rat is certainly different from *Mus huegeli*, Thomas, from Fiji ("Proc. Zool. Soc.," 1880, p. 11), and I should think from *M. exulans*, Peale, also; but I have seen no full description of that species.

ART. X.—*Description of a new Land Shell, from the Province of Nelson.*

By Professor F. W. HUTTON, F.G.S.

[Read before the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury, 1st September, 1887.]

PARYPHANTA LIGNARIA, sp. nov.

SHELL depressed, rather solid, of five slowly increasing whorls, and, apparently, narrowly umbilicated; spire slightly elevated, forming an angle of about 135°. Whorls slightly convex and

\* "Trans. N.Z. Inst.," vol. xvii., p. 199.

rounded at the periphery; irregularly banded in the direction of the growth lines with dark reddish-brown and pale brownish yellow, the first two-and-a-half whorls dark, the epidermis being rubbed off. Upper surface finely irregularly granulated with deeply undulating impressed lines, lower surface smooth and polished. Interior calcareous, bluish white. Greatest diameter about 2 inches, and least diameter,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.

The lower surface is broken off, so as to leave the shape of the umbilicus and the aperture uncertain.

The single specimen was found on the saddle between the Mokihinui and Lyell Rivers, and was lent me by Dr. Gaze, Westport, for description.

The slowly increasing whorls and apparently narrow umbilicus ally this species to *P. hochstetteri*, from which, however, it is sufficiently distinguished by its colours, and by the finer granulation of the upper surface.

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ART. XI.—*Supplement to a Monograph of New Zealand Noctuidæ*

By E. MEYRICK, B.A., F.E.S.

[Read before the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury, 6th October, 1887.]

SINCE writing my paper on the *Noctuidæ*\*, I have been enabled to again visit the British Museum, and compare the material acquired with the collection there. After a careful examination I have made several corrections in nomenclature which are here set forth, together with the description of a small new species hitherto overlooked.

NOCTUIDÆ.

LEUCANIA, Tr.

*Leuc. griseipennis*, Feld.

(*Mamestra griseipennis*, Feld., pl. cix., 22; *Chera virescens*, Butl., Cist. Ent. ii., 489; *Spaelotis inconstans*, ib. 545; *Leucania moderata*, Meyrick, "Trans. N.Z. Inst.," 1886 (nec Walk.).)

This is the species described by me as *L. moderata*, Walker, which name I find to be correctly applicable to the following species; Felder's name is therefore to be adopted for this. The other synonymy is correct as published, but in this and other cases I have repeated it in full, to avoid possible confusion.

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\* See "Trans. N.Z. Inst.," vol. xix., p. 3.